

Guideline and requirements for written assignments

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A - The *scope* of the term paper is **4,500 words** for the **Bachelor's degree** and **6,000 words** for the **Master's degree**. The paper comprises **3,000 words** (including bibliography, foot- notes and indexes). For BA and MA theses, please refer to your study regulations.

B - Please adhere to the following *format*: 1.5 lines, Times New Roman 12pt, justified, margins right and left: 2.5 cm.

C - Submission for term papers and presentations: Digitally by email (as pdf in one file and with title and name in the document name) to: gender-diversity@polsoz.fu-berlin.de. **Submission deadlines:** Summer semester: March 15, winter semester: September 15.

Submission for BA and MA theses: Send as a PDF in an e-mail to the examination office by the deadline to the responsible administrator of your degree program.

D - The term paper / presentation / BA or MA thesis should be *structured* as follows

1. Title page (please include your name, matriculation number, e-mail address, seminar title, name of lecturer* and submission date)
2. Table of contents
3. List of abbreviations (if necessary)
4. Introduction, main part, final part or conclusion (see under E)
5. Bibliography (alphabetically by author's last name) and, if applicable, appendix (if the work is empirical)
6. signed declaration of independence

E - Requirements for a written paper (term paper, presentation, BA or MA thesis): The chosen topic of the paper must relate to the seminar. The paper must deal with an academic question of the student's choice.

In the **introduction**, briefly outline the topic, the problem, your research interest, the research question (please include a question with ? at the end of the sentence), the relevance of your research question, your theses and your theoretical and/or methodological references. In the introduction, present your puzzle,

i.e. the problem that leads you to your research interest, in a clear and concise manner. Then outline the structure of the paper.

The **main section** (which is divided into various subsections) provides a structured answer to the research question and a discussion of the previously formulated theses. In other words, the research question and the theses guide your work. The main section also contextualizes the topic of the thesis or the problem (e.g. historically, geographically, etc.) and develops your own theoretical framework with reference to (current) academic debates. Make clear the relevance of the chosen theoretical framework for answering your research question; it is not only a matter of summarizing the relevant literature, but also of critical discussion and your argumentation.

The following elements must be included in the main body:

- a) **State of research:** The state of research defines the framework of your work. When presenting the state of research, the aim is to determine what scientific literature exists in the area of your research field. Here you prove that you have studied the relevant literature. Please note: The discussion of the state of research is **not** about your theoretical framework, but rather about the field within which you locate your work. Think of it like this: The state of research is the frame; the theory is the lenses that will enable you to sharpen specific aspects and explain the phenomenon. In the state of research, you discuss how authors (possibly from different fields of research) approach your topic and what approaches they offer you for dealing with your question. You work out what is or is not useful in the authors' theoretical approach and what is missing from your perspective (research gap or what is not explained). When developing your theoretical framework (see below), you can refer to the state of research and even build on it and discuss the approaches that are important to you in more depth and, if necessary, enrich them with additional theoretical approaches. With the help of the current state of research, you specify your topic, narrow it down if necessary and define your own approach.

Key questions: In which research field do you locate your work (examples: interpretative policy field research, feminist security studies, or: at the interface of transgender and migration research, etc.)? What different approaches, perspectives and approaches do you identify in the literature? How is the topic examined? What can the authors explain with the specific theoretical approach or what cannot be explained? What do you think is missing (research gap) and why is it important to close this research gap? Which theoretical and methodological approaches do you find useful for answering your own question and which not (please give reasons)? Are there any research approaches on which you are building?

- b) **Specification of the subject of research:** Please describe the subject of the work in more detail here. Please provide a political, historical and, if applicable, a geographical contextualization. Classify your topic more precisely and describe what exactly it is about. If you are dealing with specific laws, guidelines, policies, political processes (politics) or institutions (polity), these must be introduced and contextualized (historically, geographically, politically or

institutionally) for a better understanding of the subsequent analysis, depending on what exactly your work is about or what information is necessary to answer the question or to ensure the comprehensibility of the analysis.

- d) **Theory:** The term theory comes from the Greek 'theorin', which means 'to look'. It therefore refers to the systematic observation through which a phenomenon is explained. Depending on the various basic epistemological views, different types of theories can be distinguished (e.g. positivist, social constructivist, deconstructivist, structural theory, etc.). In the chapter on the state of research, you work out which theoretical approaches exist to explain the phenomenon you are looking at. In the theory chapter, you then build on this to develop your own theoretical framework, i.e. you specify which theories and theoretical concepts can be used to explain your phenomenon (preferably with regard to one of the aspects you have focused on).

Many students also often write a theory paper in which the aim is to compare theories with regard to a specific aspect. What exactly it is about and the criteria according to which you compare the theories must always be presented transparently and comprehensibly before you start discussing the theory. You can find a good overview of theory comparisons at: <https://www.soziopolis.de/wie-und-wozu-sollte-man-soziologische-theorien-miteinander-vergleichen.html>

Key questions: Which theories or theoretical concepts do you use to explain your research subject or the phenomenon? Why is the theory you have chosen appropriate? If you are combining different theories: Why does this combination make sense and can these theories be combined well with each other (question of basic assumptions of scientific theory and eclecticism)?

- d) **Methodological approach** (in the case of an empirical paper): If your own systematic investigation of facts is necessary to answer the question, you must present your methodological approach - i.e. the collection and analysis of the data - in a transparent and comprehensible manner. This section is often kept short by students; however, it is scientifically indispensable to ensure comprehensibility. This means: You must 1) explain the criteria for selecting the data/material (sampling); 2) justify and explain the procedure for data collection (e.g. why you decided to use qualitative interviews or a questionnaire with closed questions); 3) outline the exact procedure for data analysis. In the case of a qualitative content analysis, for example, explain how you form your codes for the analysis. Are you proceeding inductively or deductively? If deductive: how do you operationalize the theoretical concepts? Please explain everything in detail and include further information in the empirical appendix (e.g. interview questionnaire, transcripts, code tree, anchor examples; this does not count in the word count). Important: A clear focus must be set due to the limited scope of the term paper. The research question is the guiding principle here.
- e) **Analysis:** This section is the heart of your thesis. In the case of a theoretical paper, this section can also be dealt with under the theory chapter. In the

case of an empirically oriented paper, this is where you show what insights you have gained from empirical research and how you apply the theory to explain the phenomenon. Here you can strengthen your own argumentation on the basis of your analysis (but also with recourse to further literature) and discuss the previously formulated theses in greater depth.

- f) In the **final section/conclusion**, the results of the discussion are summarized and related to the research question. Do not forget to link back to the theory. Also discuss what insights you can draw from your results for current debates and what further research is needed in the field.
- g) Please add a signed declaration of independence to your thesis. Please use this template:

https://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/osi/gremien/Pruefungsausschuss/Vorlage-Eigenstaendigkeitserklaerung-OSI_Stand-2023-05-31.pdf

F - Requirements *for the preparation of a presentation:* The preparation of a presentation is **not** simply a descriptive presentation of the paper. Rather, a scientific question related to the topic of the presentation should be addressed. The question can, for example, relate to the current relevance of the topic or be a link/transfer to other subject areas. Due to the brevity of the presentation, the question should be very focused and not too broad. In the **introduction**, present the topic of your paper and the research question with reference to the seminar topic.

The **main part** serves to answer the question, for which you should consult further literature in addition to the topic of the presentation. The theoretical references to answer the question should be presented concisely. It is important that you pursue an independent argument along the lines of the research question, which includes a critical examination of the selected literature.

In the **final section/conclusion**, the results are summarized and related to the research question. In the final section, you should also emphasize your findings from the examination of the literature and, if necessary, refer back to current debates.

When preparing your presentation, please follow the structure and requirements for written papers (see above).

G - Standards of scientific work: Ensure a consistent and coherent citation style (e.g. Harvard system). Always cite **all** verbatim quotations, paraphrases as well as ideas, approaches and concepts of other authors with reference to the name, year of publication and page number. **Plagiarism is strictly prohibited and will have consequences.** See the OSI guidelines: https://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/osi/gremien/Pruefungsausschuss/Leitlinien_Plagiat_OSI_beschlossen-am-26_11_2019.pdf

In-Text Citation:

You can cite in American or German (in the footnote) and are free to choose which citation style you use (e.g. APA or Harvard). The only important thing is that you use it consistently throughout the paper.

For direct and indirect quotations as well as references to thoughts, **always** give

page numbers, e.g: (Peterson 2005: 502). for multiple authors e.g: (Marchand and Runyan 2011: 24) or (Caglar, Prügl and Zwingel 2013: 3); if more than 3 authors, please name the first person and then et al. and page number.

Please also pay attention to the linguistic and grammatical form of your work; use key terms and foreign words precisely and avoid discriminatory language (e.g. guidelines for gender-equitable language: <http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/frauenbeauftragte/aktivitaeten/Geschlechtergerechte-Sprache/index.html>)

H - Examples for bibliography

The bibliography must be in alphabetical order by surname and complete.

Examples for the bibliography:

Monograph: Caglar, Gülay. 2009. *Engendering macroeconomics and trade policy. Potential of transnational knowledge networks*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Anthology: Marchand, Marianne H., and Anne Sisson Runyan, eds. 2011, 2nd edition. *Gender and Global Restructuring. Sightings, Sites and Resistances*. London, New York: Routledge.

Article in anthology: Bergeron, Suzanne. 2011. "Governing Gender in Neoliberal Structuring." In *Gender and Global Restructuring. Sightings, Sites and Resistances*. Edited by Marianne H. Marchand, and Anne Sisson Runyan, 66-77. London, New York: Routledge.

Article in Journal: Peterson, V. Spike. 2005. "How (the Meaning of) Gender Matters in Political Economy." *New Political Economy* 10(4): 499-521.